

MINISTRY OF NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT, MINES AND FORESTRY

*2009-2010
Accessibility Plan*



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Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 sets out the roadmap to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Under this act, accessibility standards are being developed and implemented to break down barriers in key areas of everyday life.

These standards will increase accessibility for people with disabilities in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the built environment.

The Government of Ontario is preparing to lead the way towards an accessible province, beginning in January 2010 when the first standard — for customer service — comes into force.

Each year, the government sets the course to prevent, identify and remove barriers through annual accessibility plans required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

Building on last year's plan, the 2009-10 accessibility plans will continue moving the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry towards the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

*Links to the other ministry plans are available at:

http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/ministry/accessibilityPlans/ministries_accplans10.htm

Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Completed (Dec 08 – Jan 09)

Planned Action(s): The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry will conduct a Gap Analysis based on the 14 key areas of the Customer Service Standard and will incorporate Ontario's Customer Service Standard. The 14 key areas are:

1. Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
2. Use reasonable efforts to ensure that your policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality and opportunity
3. Set a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access your goods, use your services and any other measures your organization offers (assistive devices, services, or methods) to enable them to access your goods and use your services.
4. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
5. Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises you own or operate that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability.
6. Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties.
7. Where admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability.
8. Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use your goods or services are temporarily disrupted.

9. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on your behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
10. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who are involved in developing your policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
11. Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how you provide goods or services to people with disabilities and how you will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. Make the information about your feedback process readily available to the public.
12. Document in writing all policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service and meet other document requirements set out in the standard.
13. Notify customers that documents required under the customer service standard are available upon request.
14. When giving documents required under the customer service standard to a person with a disability, provide the information in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2008 - March 2009

Results Achieved: Through the gap analysis it was determined that the ministry did not have policies or practices in place and has since adopted the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Completed

Planned Action(s): The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry will create AODA Customer Service Standard policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.

These policies, practices and procedures will be consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

These policies, practices and procedures will address such areas as use of service animals and support persons, notice of temporary disruptions, training for staff and use of personal assistive devices to access goods and services.

Implementation Timeframe: March 2009 – September 2009

Results Achieved: The ministry adopted the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy. This policy outlines what the Ontario government must do to comply with this regulation and what our customers may expect from us.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Completed

Planned Action(s): The ministry will provide training to staff regarding proper customer service protocols for people with disabilities as well as other third parties who act on our behalf.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 2009 – January 2010

Results Achieved: Ministry staff have been trained.

Report on Other Accessibility Commitments

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Act

Commitment: Complete and Ongoing

The ministry will continue to consider acts or regulations for a barrier review analysis as part of the regular planning cycle. As well, the ministry will ensure that new statutes use appropriate language with respect to people with disabilities and meet the objectives of the AODA.

Planned Action(s): The ministry is currently rewriting the *Ontario Mining Act*. In doing so, the Legal Services Branch will use the OPS Diversity Lens, which is a tool for policy and program development, to ensure that all amendments are AODA compliant. As well, the ministry will continue to consider new acts or regulations for a barrier review analysis as part of the regular planning cycle.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2008 – September 2009

Results Achieved: The ministry reviewed the Ontario Mining Act and determined it met the current requirements of the AODA.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Program

Commitment: Ongoing

Provide training to all new managers on accommodating employees and job applicants who have disabilities.

Planned Action(s): The ministry will add training to the new manager's orientation site, which is provided in their orientation package and will follow-up in the manager's first year to ensure that the training was completed.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 2009 – Sept 2010

Results Achieved: The training was included in the new manager's orientation. Follow-up was conducted and all new managers had completed the training.

Focus Area: Communications and Information

Impact: Service Commitment: New

The ministry will review its Internet site to identify any existing web content and commonly used online forms that are not accessible and create a plan to make them accessible by December 2010.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 2009 – Dec 2010

Results Achieved: The ministry will report on results in next year's plan.

Focus Area: Communications and Information

Impact: Program Service Commitment: New and Ongoing

Education and awareness will continue to be a priority to build employee awareness of types of disabilities and how to respond to persons with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will create an Accessibility Intranet site where staff can find information on all aspects of accessibility. Expand on Accessibility Awareness Week to include articles surrounding the new standards as they are implemented and include these articles as well "Accessibility Bites" in the ministry newsletter.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2009 – September 2010

Results Achieved:

Different accessibility topics were posted on the ministry's intranet site and forwarded to staff. A new intranet accessibility page will be created where the Accessibility Team can post information for all staff.

For More Information

Questions or comments about the ministry's accessibility plan are always welcome.

Please phone: Pam Hull, MNDMF Accessibility Lead

General inquiry number: 705 564-7444

TTY number: 1 866 349-1388

1-800 number: 1 888-415-9845

E-mail: aodamndmf@ontario.ca

Ministry website address: http://www.mndmf.gov.on.ca/default_e.asp

Visit the **Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario** web portal. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

Alternate formats of this document are available free upon request from:

ServiceOntario Publications

Phone: 1-800-668-9938

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